<u>REMARKS</u>

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated February 1, 2007. Claims 1-7 and 10 are presented for examination, of which Claims 1, 7 and 10 are in independent form. Claims 8 and 9 have been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter. Claims 1-3, 5-7 and 10 have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicant regards as his invention. Claim 4 has been amended as to matters of form only; no change in scope is intended or believed effected by at least this amendment. Favorable reconsideration is requested. The canceled claims will not be further addressed herein.

The specification has been amended to conform the Summary of Invention section to the amended claims.

Claims 1, 6-7 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,938,154 (Berson). Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Berson in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,117,493 (Matasushima). Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Berson in view of Matasushima, and further in view of U.S. Patent Number 7,158,657 (Okazaki et al.).

As shown above, Applicant has amended independent Claims 1, 7 and 10 in terms that more clearly define what he regards as his invention. Applicant submits that these amended independent claims, together with the remaining claims dependent thereon, are patentably distinct from the cited prior art for at least the following reasons.

Claim 1 is directed to an authentication method of an image processing system in which a host computer, an authentication apparatus and an image processing apparatus are connected to a network. The method includes: (1) a transmission step of, at the image processing

apparatus, transmitting data for specifying the authentication apparatus to the host computer in a

case where the host computer remotely operates the image processing apparatus; (2) an

authentication step of, at the host computer, causing the authentication apparatus specified by the

data to perform an authentication process with respect to the remote operation from the host

computer to the image processing apparatus; and (3) a remote operation step of, at the host

computer, remotely operating the image processing apparatus in accordance with an

authentication result of the authentication process in the authentication step.

By virtue of the structure recited in Claim 1, since the data for specifying the

authentication apparatus is transmitted to the host computer, the host computer can easily specify

the authentication apparatus. In addition, it is possible to improve security by permitting the

remote operation of a host computer, or limiting the remote operation of the host computer.

Berson relates to a network communication system for secure identification,

including a network device, such as a printer, copier, scanner or a facsimile machine, and a

network user having an assigned digital certificate. Berson discusses that when the network user

sends to the network device a command for operation of the network device and the user's digital

certificate, the network device authenticates the digital certificate of the user, and performs the

requested operation if the network user is authenticated. Berson does not, however, discuss any

authentication apparatus for authenticating a remote operation from a host computer to an image

processing apparatus. Applicants have found nothing in Berson that would teach or suggest "a

transmission step of, at the image processing apparatus, transmitting data for specifying the

authentication apparatus to the host computer in a case where the host computer remotely

operates the image processing apparatus," "an authentication step of, at the host computer,

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causing the authentication apparatus specified by the data to perform an authentication process with respect to the remote operation from the host computer to the image processing apparatus" or "a remote operation step of, at the host computer, remotely operating the image processing apparatus in accordance with an authentication result of the authentication process in said authentication step", as recited in Claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claim 1 is not anticipated by Berson.

A review of the other art of record, including Matsushima and Okazaki, has failed to reveal anything which, in Applicant's opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of the art discussed above, as a reference against Claim 1.

Independent Claims 7 and 10 are system and computer recording medium claims, respectively, corresponding to method Claim 1, and are believed to be patentable over the cited prior art for at least the same reasons as discussed above in connection with Claim 1.

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

/Jennifer A. Reda/
Jennifer A. Reda
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No.: 57,840

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3801
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

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